



SENECA-CAYUGA NATION

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE	Monday, December 08, 2025	TIME PLACE	6pm CT Zoom only	FACILITATOR	Carrie Kneeland
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MEMBERS			
Roberta Smith	Present – Zoom	Yvonne Perryman	Present – Zoom
Carrie Kneeland	Present – Zoom	Jo Lynn Gentry	Present – Zoom
Natalie Dixon	Present - Zoom	Others Present:	Curt Lawrence – Present via Zoom 4 General Council Members

TIME	ITEM	OWNER
6:00pm	Called to Order - Quorum established at the Seneca-Cayuga Nation's regular Constitution Committee (CC) meeting.	Carrie
	Approval of Previous Minutes – No minutes approved on 12/08/2025. See minutes of 12/22/2025 for approval of 11/24/2025 and 11/30/2025 meeting minutes. <u>CERTIFICATION</u> On <u>12/22/2025</u> the minutes of <u>11/30/2025</u> were approved by unanimous committee consent. Copy emailed to BC Secretary on <u>12/29/2025</u>.	Natalie

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	<p>Housekeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Roll Call ii. Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes – NOV 11, 2025 iii. Confirmation of next meeting – DEC 22, 2025 	Natalie
	<p>Planned Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housekeeping • Newsletter Review • Duties of Officers • Responses from Facebook or Email? • Open Forum • Next Constitution meeting 12/22/2025 @ 6pm 	
Minutes Begin		
	<p>Discussion on open records requests currently out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary-Treasurer has only just responded to Constitution Committee member records request for election ordinance sent several months ago • Secretary-Treasurer has not responded to or otherwise provided documents for any other records request of any Constitution Committee member (3 open) 	
	<p>Budget review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect rate charged to FY2026 budgets reported to be approximately 42.27% per Natalie who was present at most recent monthly Business Committee meeting on Dec 2, 2025 • No approved budgets have been provided despite repeated requests 	
	<p>Review of Duties of Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty of all Business Committee (BC) members to uphold Constitution, this is affirmed in the draft Oath of Office • Chief's Duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussion on the mechanisms for a Chief to call a Special Meeting of the General Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief's discretion 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written majority of Business Committee ▪ Properly-filed General Council petition ○ Delegation of duties necessary when there is a conflict of interest or the Chief is otherwise unavailable 	
	<p>Constitution Committee member asks Chief if there has been a callout posted for the Special Meeting petition request</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief states that he has not received anything from the Enrollment Committee, and he has started “going back through the electronic” due to questions ● Enrollment Committee member present relays that they were under the impression that the Enrollment Officer and Secretary-Treasurer were involved in petition verification ● Chief rephrases that he has not yet seen original documentation back from whoever has it, stating it “must be” enrollment officer 	
	<p>Continued review of Duties of Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief’s Duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no timeframe to the current Constitution for calling a Special Meeting, timely needs to be added and defined ○ Timely is defined elsewhere as 10 business days when in relation to simple records requests under Secretary duties ○ Further General Council petition definitions should go under Structure of Government article ○ Chief’s duties include serving as the Chairperson of the Business Committee and Regular General Council Meetings ○ Intergovernmental relationships should extend to other governments and Native Nations ○ Government-to-government relationships should be separated from business ○ Land is mentioned in the Corporate Charter, may be relevant to mention under duties as well, though any requirement for General Council approvals on land acquisition would be 	

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	<p>a detriment to land acquisition based on typical seller timeframes</p>	
	<p>Discussion over land acquisition funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two General Council Resolutions with the same Resolution # but two totally different end results on land acquisition funding brought up at the 2025 Annual Meeting of the General Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General Council Resolution #312-060510 found in Secretary-Treasurer records as a standalone document in 2010 folder ○ General Council Resolution #312-060510 on page 3 of a 2021 Business Committee Resolution • Chief asks for clarification on which General Council Resolution is being used currently by tribal government • Constitution Committee member reminds Chief that he closed the point of order that called the issue to the General Council's attention at the 2025 Annual Meeting without getting the necessary clarification • Chief states the current General Council Resolution being used since 2021 is the one that replenishes the fund from General Council Welfare Fund on an annual basis rather than the one that authorized a one-time purchase • Constitution Committee member clarifies that that General Council Resolution currently used appeared in 2021 and the then Secretary-Treasurer's records provided to the 2023-2024's Constitution Advisory Committee Secretary reflected two differing Resolutions, one filed under 2010 and one filed under 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The General Council Resolution present in the Secretary-Treasurer's records under 2010 that stated the then-Chief could request permission for additional Land Acquisition Funding after an initial \$500,000 transfer from the General Council Welfare Fund ○ The one likely provided in 2021 from an unknown source to the Secretary-Treasurer stated that \$500,000 would automatically be pulled out of General Council Welfare Fund 	

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	<p>every single year from the original date of that General Council Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both of these General Council Resolutions have the same legislative number, date, and votes, but they have different signers and are printed on different letterhead so it's unclear which is the legitimate General Council Resolution ● Chief states he has copies of both General Council Resolutions and he is in favor of automatic replenishment of \$500,000 to Land Acquisition Fund every year ● Chief states he does not know how much land has been bought since 2021 with Land Acquisition Fund when asked by Constitution Committee member 	
	<p>Continued review of Duties of Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Duties of Office related to land and the General Council's approval of land sales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tribal land cannot be sold per the Corporate Charter – the General Council has forced the sale of land before including the C-Store in New York ○ Right-of-ways and easements are relevant issues when it comes to discussing the restriction of land sales to General Council approval ○ Selling land should require General Council's approval when not related to reasonable infrastructure easements, easements for an individual do require General Council approval ● Chief's Duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To build and maintain economic relationships with businesses that benefit the Nation ○ Line of succession discussed when it comes to duties that are not done, including calling Special Meetings of the General Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Chief questions the determination of legitimacy for a call and how it would travel down a line of succession ■ He gives the example of the current petition where the electronic copy had signatures with initials, the paper 	

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	<p>signatures have many signatures where the names can't be read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief is reminded by Constitution Committee member that he does not determine who a member is so he does not need to be verifying signatures ▪ Business Committee member present clarifies that Enrollment did verify the signatures and certified 153 valid signatures on the filed petition, their roll numbers all matched, and now the Secretary-Treasurer has been involved in the verification process when our Constitution and By-Laws do not require a specific verification process ▪ Constitution Committee member clarifies that the failure to call a Special Meeting after verification from Enrollment is in violation of Robert's Rules as it requires the presiding officer to expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of members, as well as the presiding officer may not take advantage of a citizen's lack of knowledge on parliamentary law, and cannot be more strict or technical than necessary, and to have good judgement on a matter ▪ Enrollment Committee is discussed as a better tribal government entity for signature verification purposes 	
7:44pm	Curt Lawrence, Business Committee liaison arrives	
	<p>Review of Enrollment Committee purposes and functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposes include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Process applications for enrollment ○ Verify tribal enrollment eligibility ○ Maintain enrollment records ○ Keeping enrollment information confidential • Membership includes 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No end date ○ Nomination by the Enrollment Committee or be past Secretary-Treasurer for membership eligibility ○ Ratification by the General Council for nominated individuals ● Current process is that the Enrollment Officer receives and verifies whether all required information is included or not, when application is given to Enrollment Committee they can send it back and request more documentation ● Former Indian Child Welfare (ICW) employee speaks to verification process for enrollment eligibility of children in state custody <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For enrollment purposes, generations are skipped sometimes and not all parents or caregivers know the enrolled grandparent's birthdays ● Enrollment Committee member present states that paternity tests have been requested by Enrollment Committee to verify eligibility ● Current Enrollment Ordinance reviewed – amended June 2023 by <u>General Council Resolution #007-060323</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrollment Committee is defined as regularly reviewing enrollment applications and either recommending or deciding approval or rejection of enrollment in the Nation ○ There has been a case where a relinquishment happened prior to the birth of a child who later applied for enrollment ○ Situations are brought to Enrollment Committee as they arise, enrollment numbers are not given out without approval by the Enrollment Committee ○ Constitution Committee member reports that the Business Committee is now being given semi-anonymized notifications of enrollments, Enrollment Committee member states that it used to be just the names of enrollees provided ○ Constitution Committee member states they appreciate it when the new enrollees' names 	

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	<p>are read to the General Council and that there is a sense of pride in it, others present agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment Committee as a subcommittee of the General Council to account for nomination process • 2 Constitution Committee members state that the Enrollment Officer should be the appropriate person to verify signatures for filed General Council petitions • Question is asked by Constitution Committee member about children who are not currently enrolled but may potentially enroll and are in the state's custody, does the Enrollment Officer work with the Enrollment Committee to determine eligibility? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrollment Committee member present confirms that this situation has happened and it was brought to the Enrollment Committee, though said Committee member is unaware whether the Nation intervened in the ICW case ○ Currently there is nothing in our Constitution about our children, Enrollment Committee seems best suited with ICW-related verification and applications • Final Enrollment Committee purposes agreed upon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To examine and verify all enrollment applications and documents, determine accuracy and sufficiency of research as presented, to request additional information as necessary for enrollment applications ○ To aid the designated tribal agent for Indian child welfare with the verification of eligibility and/or application for potential enrollment of a Seneca-Cayuga child in state custody. ○ To maintain the right to privacy and confidentiality of tribal members and their enrollment files. 	
	<p>Discussion on newsletter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed that it will be two pages facing together • Oath of Office draft confirmed to be included • Letter page to come first, then discussion/QR page 	
	<p>Open Forum</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target completion date is March 31, 2026 • No other matters brought 	
	Confirmation of next meeting on December 22, 2025 @ 6pm	
8:40pm	Motion #14 (Carrie/Natalie) – to adjourn meeting - unanimous committee vote, 1 abstention by Yvonne – motion carries	